

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Randy Ellis

Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper

Rodney Ellis Bill Brittenham
Cole Meador Preston Ellis

Prayers

Mark Davis Jerry Schnelle

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Randy Ellis

Song Leader

Jack Calvert

Lord's Supper

Rodney Ellis Preston Ellis

Prayers

Jon Barry Pete Rowland

WEDNESDAY

Announcements

Clay Morris

Song Leader

Cory Easley

Prayers

Rodney Ellis Joseph Barry

Invitation

Bill Brittenham

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Deacons

Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Dave Massey

Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.
Worship6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:35-30

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16;
1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

Think On These Things

Franklin Drive Church of Christ
2301 Franklin Drive ■ Texarkana, AR 71854 ■ (870) 772-0746



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Issue 44

“We Are Not Under Law, But Under Grace!”

Bryan Garlock

Occasionally this author will hear people unequivocally state, “...but we are not under law, but under grace!” While the statement is not without Scriptural backing (Rom. 6.14-15), there is a dangerous mindset – interpretation – that is often publicized when one teaches that we must obey God’s law and commandments and hold strictly to what the Bible teaches, that is, that we are not under law, but under grace. Therefore, when one adopts the idea that we are not under law *at all*, then they say there is no law for how one worships God, serves Him, or even how one is saved by Him. Coupled with this is the notion that Jesus has done it all for us – there’s nothing we can do or must do. Simply put, if Jesus has done everything for us and there is no law, there is *nothing* to obey. Surely we can see the serious consequences of this erroneous doctrine. As Peter taught, “There are some things in them [Paul’s writings] that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to

their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.” (2 Peter 3.16)

Paul wrote, “For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!” (Rom. 6.14-15; Read the entire chapter for context.) Did Paul teach that we are without law?

First, typically speaking, “law” in the book of Romans refers to the Law of Moses. A simple cursory reading of Romans demands this conclusion. Therefore, to say we are “not under law” (6.14-15), have “died to the law” (7.4), have been “released from the law” (7.6), and that “...Christ is the end of the law” (10.4) as if they mean something else is a disservice to context. As to God’s grace, it is seen throughout the Old Testament (Gen. 6.8; Exo. 34.6; Jonah 4.2, etc.). Therefore, the Law of Moses was not without grace; grace was not a “new thing” or exclusive to the New Covenant. Consequently, those under the Old Law lived their lives in obedience to the law,

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Willie Margaret Mobley, Bob Buls, Bonnie Allgor, Max Thomas, Maxine Burnham and Mary Alice Turner.** Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

Continue to pray for **Max Thomas.** He is still in very serious condition in the hospital. Please keep him, **Ann** and **Mark** continually in your prayers.

Jean Cronce is scheduled for another surgery Tuesday, Nov. 7th in Dallas.

Sonny Monaghan got a good initial report but needs some additional tests.

Joey Avance had another throat treatment in Little Rock. He is scheduled for another in 2 weeks. Please continue to pray for improvement in his health.

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that is, by faith, and relied on God's grace – this did not change under the New Law. Accordingly, it is not true that the Old Testament is law only and the New Testament is grace only and that the two are opposed to one another as if law is against grace; rather, the two complement one another.

Secondly, we are under law. In fact, "where there is no law there is no

transgression" and "sin indeed was in the world before the law [of Moses] was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law" (Rom. 4.15; 5.13). Consequently, if there is no law today, there is no sin and no one is a sinner! Remember, "sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3.4) The Bible calls the law we are bound to "the perfect law" (James 1.25) and we are "under the law to Christ" (1 Cor. 9.21; cf. Gal. 6.2). Paul said it was the "law of the Spirit of life" (Rom. 8.2) that set him free, but Jesus said the truth sets one free (John 8.32). Therefore, the gospel is law that sets one free from sin (Rom. 1.16-17). Finally, when speaking about the New Covenant (New Testament era), God prophesied, "I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." (Jer. 31.31-34) The law that would be written in our hearts is the Law of Christ. Some argue, "...but the law of Christ is to simply love God with all your heart." (cf. Matt. 22.37) Yet, to love God is to keep His commandments [law] (John 14.15) and to break the commandments is to transgress God's law (1 John 3.4).

Grace does not negate or exclude law; rather, it upholds law. Paul taught, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age." (Titus 2.11-12) Notice how grace teaches us to live holy lives and to deny sin. This is because God's grace was never meant to be a license to sin or a cover for sin, but a teacher of righteous living. Consequently, if there is no law, there is nothing to deny! What's more, if it were not for law, there would

be no grace, because grace cannot exist without a law being in place. Since we live under grace, how ought we to live?

What, then, did Paul mean by "not under law but under grace"? The entire chapter (Romans 6.1-23) is about the Romans dying to sin and walking in newness of life (both accomplished in baptism). In other words, at one time they were enslaved to sin, but now they were to be enslaved to righteousness. Paul began this section of Scripture attacking this notion that grace is, in a sense, a license to sin. He wrote, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?" It was not the case that the more they sinned the more grace would abound – as if grace was automatically and unconditionally activated in their lives whenever sin was present. Either sin reigned because the law of Christ was transgressed, or grace did because of their obedience to the law of Christ. Notice then, how grace and law work together. Remember too, where there is no law there is no sin. Since one could choose to obey unrighteousness, this must have meant he willed to transgress some law. Fortunately, sin can no longer have dominion over us because we – like Christ – can overcome sin. In fact, it is in Christ that we have incredible access to forgiveness (Rom. 8.1; Heb. 4.16; 1 John 1.9), not through the law [of Moses] (as the Jews sought after, Rom. 9.30-32).

Paul wrote, "...yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be

justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified." (Gal. 2.16) First, this is talking about the Law of Moses, and secondly, it is true that law cannot justify because once law is transgressed (Gal. 3.10) it brings wrath (Rom. 4.15). Consider that only Jesus kept strict obedience to the law ("works of the law") – He alone was sinless. Since everyone else has sinned or will sin (Rom. 3.23), only an obedient faith in Christ can justify. Therefore, we are no longer under a law that cannot set us free from sin [the law of Moses] (Acts 13.39; Gal. 5.13). Instead, we are under grace; sin cannot be allowed to reign – it must cease.

Those who advocate that we are not under law are striving to live by a system that permits them to continue in sin with impunity. Unfortunately, this is not new. Even some of our brethren in the first century were holding to this error. Hence, Paul wrote, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" (Rom. 6.1) Likewise, Peter taught that false teachers were preaching "liberty" (freedom) to do as one pleased (because of grace) (2 Peter 2.19). However, he taught that one should not use his freedom in Christ to do evil (1 Peter 2.16; cf. Gal. 5.13). Jude warned that these were "ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (Jude 4). While we certainly have freedom in Christ, this is not freedom from law, allowing us to sin, but freedom from sin as we live under the law of Christ. In love, BG